United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea SPLOS/286

Meeting of States Parties

Distr.: General
15 June 2015

Original: English

Twenty-fifth Meeting
New York, 8-12 June 2015

Decision regarding the conditions of service of the members of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

The Meeting of States Parties,

Reaffirming the importance of the work of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for coastal States and the international community as a whole,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts undertaken by the Commission to consider the submissions by coastal States in a timely, efficient and effective manner,

Mindful of the workload of the Commission owing to a large number of submissions already made and the number of submissions which are expected to be made in the future,

Recognizing the need to ensure that the Commission can effectively perform the functions entrusted to it under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, while maintaining its high level of quality and expertise,

Recalling the decision of the twenty-first Meeting of States Parties regarding the workload of the Commission (SPLOS/229), including the request to the Commission to consider meeting in New York for up to 26 weeks but not less than an intended minimum of 21 weeks a year,

Taking note with appreciation of the decisions by the Commission that in 2015 and for the remainder of the term of office of its current members, which expires in June 2017, it would continue to hold three sessions of seven weeks each, including plenary meetings, for a total of 21 weeks of meetings of the Commission and its subcommissions, and its ongoing efforts to adopt new working arrangements for its subcommissions,

Recognizing the special challenges of developing States Parties whose experts are serving on the Commission, and, in this regard, the important role of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of the members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission,

Remaining concerned about the implications of the workload of the Commission for the conditions of service of its members,

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Recalling the decision of the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties to establish an open-ended working group to consider the conditions of service of the members of the Commission stipulated in paragraph 77 of the report of the meeting (SPLOS/263),

Recalling also paragraph 75 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to take appropriate measures, within overall existing resource levels, to further strengthen the capacity of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, serving as the secretariat of the Commission, in order to ensure enhanced support and assistance to the Commission and its subcommissions in their consideration of submissions, as required by paragraph 9 of annex III to the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, in particular its human resources, taking into account the need for simultaneous work on several submissions,

Recalling further paragraph 80 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, in which the Assembly authorized the Secretary-General, as an interim measure and subject to the availability of funds in the trust fund established pursuant to resolution 55/7 for facilitating the participation of members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission, following the allocation of the required funds to cover the costs of travel and daily subsistence allowance of the members of the Commission from developing States for the sessions of the Commission in 2015, to reimburse those members for the costs of medical travel insurance from that trust fund on a session-by-session basis and subject to a reasonable limit that the Secretary-General shall determine, based on the information regarding medical travel insurance available to him,

Recalling the request to the Secretary-General, contained in paragraphs 81 and 82 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, to provide written information on options for mechanisms to provide medical insurance coverage to members of the Commission, including costs and, in that regard, to give due consideration to the exceptional character of the Commission, its working arrangements and the importance of its work for the international community,

Mindful of the intention of the General Assembly, expressed in paragraph 83 of its resolution 69/245, to further review the terms of reference for the trust fund established pursuant to resolution 55/7 for the purpose of facilitating the participation of members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission, after consideration of the information provided by the Secretary-General on options for mechanisms to provide medical insurance coverage to members of the Commission,

Recalling the request to the Secretary-General, contained in paragraph 84 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, to provide, in consultation with the Commission, written information on options for providing additional working space to the Division in order to ensure that the members of the Commission have sufficient working space during their work at the sessions of the Commission and its subcommissions, before the end of April 2015,

Taking note of the written information provided by the Secretary-General pursuant to the request in paragraph 84 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, in consultation with the Commission, on options for providing additional working space to the Division in order to ensure that the members of the Commission have

sufficient working space during their work at the sessions of the Commission and its subcommissions,

Taking note also of the interim measure for reimbursement for the costs of medical travel insurance for members of the Commission from developing States for the sessions of the Commission in 2015, pursuant to paragraph 80 of General Assembly resolution 69/245,

Welcoming the ongoing work done by the open-ended working group to consider the conditions of service of the members of the Commission,

1. *Takes note with concern* that, in paragraphs 10 and 11 of his letter dated 13 April 2015 addressed to the President of the twenty-fifth Meeting of States Parties (SPLOS/283), the Chair of the Commission indicated that the working space and facilities currently available to the Commission needed to be more adequate and that it was the Commission's strong expectation that its requirements related to the conditions of service would be addressed by States Parties and, ultimately, by the General Assembly as soon as possible, and well before the expiration of the current term of office of the Commission;

2. *Emphasizes* the need for members of the Commission to have more suitable working space for their work at the sessions of the Commission and its subcommissions, and indicates that this matter needs to be addressed;

3. *Recognizes* the written information from the Secretary-General, in response to the request in paragraph 84 of General Assembly resolution 69/245, and underlines the need for further information at the beginning of September 2015, including costings, on other possible alternative options for providing additional working space to the Division in order to ensure that the members of the Commission have more suitable working space, bearing in mind the special requirements of the Commission, including the need to remain located within the same premises as the Division, and urges the General Assembly, at its seventieth session, to take appropriate and necessary measures to resolve this matter;

4. *Reaffirms* the obligation of States under the Convention whose experts are serving on the Commission to defray the expenses of the experts they have nominated while in performance of Commission duties, including the provision of medical coverage, and urges these States to do their utmost to ensure the full participation of those experts in the work of the Commission, including the meetings of subcommissions, in accordance with the Convention;

5. *Takes note with appreciation* of the ongoing work by the Secretary-General in response to the request in paragraph 81 of General Assembly resolution 69/245 for written information regarding options for mechanisms to provide medical insurance coverage to members of the Commission, including costs, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue this work as a matter of urgency, with a view to making the written information available at the beginning of September 2015;

6. *Urges* the General Assembly, at its seventieth session, to take any necessary measures in the light of this information, which may require modifications to the terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of the members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission;

7. *Notes with concern* the current state of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of the members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission and, in this regard, welcomes recent contributions made or pledged by States Parties, and urges States that are in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

8. *Decides* that the open-ended working group will continue to consider issues related to the conditions of service of the members of the Commission, in particular issues related to working space and medical insurance coverage, with the intention of assisting progress on these matters during the seventieth session of the General Assembly;

9. *Also decides* to continue the consideration of other conditions of service of the members of the Commission stipulated in paragraph 77 of the report of the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties (SPLOS/263) within the open-ended working group;

10. *Further decides* to take up and review matters related to the conditions of service of the members of the Commission at the twenty-sixth Meeting of States Parties under the item "Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf".